

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES IMMEDIATE

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TOSEC 317

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: OVIP (SECRETARY ROGERS)

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF WATERGATE HEARING, MAY 24, 1973

FROM THE OPERATIONS CENTER

THE COMMITTEE QUESTIONED GERALD ALCH, MCCORD'S FORMER ATTORNEY, CLOSELY. ALCH REITERATED HIS STATEMENTS OF MAY 23 WHICH HAD CAST DOUBT ON MCCORD'S CREDIBILITY, ESPECIALLY CONCERNING WHITE HOUSE OFFERS OF EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY AND WHITE HOUSE ATTEMPTS TO PLACE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WATERGATE BREAK- IN ON THE CIA. ALCH HAD CHARGED MCCORD WITH INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATIONS ON THESE POINTS. THE COMMITTEE, THROUGH ITS QUESTIONING, ATTEMPTED TO SHOW THAT MCCORD COULD HAVE REASONABLY REACHED THESE CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES AS HE SAW THEM. HOWEVER, THE COMMITTEE WAS UNABLE TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICT BETWEEN ALCH AND MCCORD ON THESE POINTS.

IN THE AFTERNOON, ONE OF THE SEVEN WATERGATE BURGLARS, BERNARD BARKER, TESTIFIED. HE DENIED RECEIVING OR PASSING ON TO CO- DEFENDENTS OFFERS OF EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY. AS FAR AS HE KNEW, THE OPERATION WAS MOUNTED SOLELY BY E. HOWARD HUNT. HE WAS MOTIVATED BY A SENSE OF LOYALTY TO E. HOWARD

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HUNT DATING BACK TO THE BAY OF PIGS. BARKER' S TASK IN THE BREAK- IN WAS TO FIND AND PHOTOGRAPH DOCUMENTS PROVING THAT THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE WAS RECEIVING FUNDS FROM RADICAL DOMESTIC GROUPS AND FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS, PARTICULARLY CUBA. HE STATED THAT HE PARTICIPATED IN THE ELLSBERG BREAK- IN BECAUSE HUNT TOLD HIM THAT ELLSBERG WAS PASSING NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY.

THE LAST WITNESS OF THE DAY WAS ALFRED C. BALDWIN, A FORMER FBI AGENT WHO MONITORED DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE TELEPHONE TAPS FROM A ROOM IN THE NOWARD JOHNSON MOTEL. BALDWIN STATED THAT HE HAD BEEN HIRED TO WORK FOR THE COMMITTEE TO RE- ELECT THE PRESIDENT BY MC CORD AND LA RUE AND THAT HIS DUTIES HAD INCLUDED ACCOMPANYING MRS. MITCHELL IN HER TRAVELS AND THE SURVEILLANCE OF DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE CAPITAL AREA AS WELL AS MONITORING THE PHONE TAPS. BALDWIN DESCRIBED IN DETAIL HIS PARTICIPATION IN THE ABORTIVE JUNE 17 WATERGATE BREAK- IN. HIS ROLE WAS TO REPORT VIA WALKIE- TALKIE FROM THE HOWARD JOHNSON MOTEL ON ANY UNUSUAL ACTIVITY AT THE WATERGATE THAT EVENING. BALDWIN EMPHATICALLY DENIED THAT HE WAS A DEMOCRATIC DOUBLE AGENT, AND SAID THE RUMOUR AROSE BECAUSE HE WAS NOT A DEFENDANT IN THE ORIGINAL WATERGATE TRIAL; HE WAS GIVEN IMMUNITY IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS EVIDENCE. OF HIS ROLE IN MONITORING THE ORIGINAL WATERGATE WIRE- TAPS, BALDWIN STATED THAT HE GAVE THE TYPEWRITTEN REPORTS OF THESE WIRETAPS ONLY TO MR. MC CORD. BALDWIN SAID THAT, BASED ON THE CREDENTIALS OF ALL THE PEOPLE HE WORKED WITH, INCLUDING MR. MITCHELL, HE DIDN' T QUESTION THE LEGALITY OF THE WIRETAPS.

SENATOR ERVIN ANNOUNCED THAT THE COMMITTEE WOULD HOLD ITS NEXT SESSION ON JUNE 5. RUSH

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